

In the Claims

Change the claims as indicated below:

1. (currently amended) A baseball batting practice method for improving the batting skills of a player, comprising:

selecting a rubber spherical ball from which a segment has been removed to leave the ball comprised of an exterior spherical portion and a flat area, the removed segment being sized such that a perpendicular line from a center of the flat area to an opposite side of the remaining spherical portion is equal to or between forty-five and fifty-five percent of the original spherical ball diameter;

selecting a pitcher of lesser skill from a larger number of practice pitchers who which are available;

providing an instructional table describing and illustrating grips, arm movements and release methods for the various standard pitches, for pitcher enablement, and for the batter to learn to identify the standard pitches associated with arm movements, to enable the batter to improve batting ability by recognizing the arm movement while batting and anticipating the standard pitch associated with the identified arm movement, said standard pitches comprising a fastball in which the ball is gripped vertically and released straight overhand, a knuckleball in which the ball is gripped by placing the flat area of the unit in a palm of a throwing hand and thrown and released straight overhand, a screwball in which the ball is gripped vertically, thrown underhand, and released while twisting a throwing hand to the right for right hand throwers or to the left for left hand throwers, a slider in which the ball is gripped vertically and thrown and released at a three-quarter

side arm position, a curveball in which the ball is gripped vertically and thrown and released at a one-half side arm position, a sinkerball in which the ball is gripped with the flat area up and thrown and released at a one-half side arm position, a splitfinger fastball in which the ball is gripped the flat area up and thrown and released at a three-quarter side arm position, and a rising fastball in which the ball is gripped with the flat area down, thrown one-half side arm, and released while slightly tilting the ball forward.;

    said pitcher gripping the ball in a manner to enable one of said several standard pitches;

        the pitcher initiating a throwing motion;

        the pitcher moving an arm in a manner to enable a chosen standard pitch;

        the pitcher releasing the ball at a time and in a manner to enable the chosen pitch and to direct the ball to a target area in proximity to a human batter, to enable the human batter to attempt to identify standard pitches; and

    said batter swinging at said ball with a bat having a substantially constant diameter smaller than a regulation baseball bat, to improve the human batter's batting skills.

2 - 23. (canceled)